NUMBER 300

CITY OF WASHINGTON, WEDNESDAY MORNING, APRIL 6, 1853.

CONGRESSIONAL. SPEECH OF MR. JOHN M. CLAYTON,

OF DELAWARE,

In vindication of the Central American treaty concluded with Great Britain on the 19th April, 1950; delivered in the Senate March 8 and 9, 1853. in the Senate March 8 and 9, 1853.

Mr. CLAYTON said: In rising for the first time, after a long absence, to address the Senate, I labor under some embatrassment from observing that the gentlemen around me are generally strangers to me, and that not a single individual of all my ancient associates who served with me in this body twenty-four years ago is now present. I am irresistibly led back to the events of a period over which nearly a quarter of a century has spread its manile, when those who filled this chamber as the representaives of the sovereign States of this Union mingled in discussion on the great issues then before the country, and when the walls of this chamber daily rung with the ochoes of their voices, as they poured forth "the logic and the wisdom and the will for which they were so preeminently distinguished. Their debates were but justly compared to the procession of a Roman triumph, moving in dignity and order to the lofty music of its march, and glittering all over with the spoils of the civilized world. They are gone; and I, the youngest and humblest of their body, am left to tell the tale. The last of them who left this scene of their strifes and contentions was the present the test.

body, am left to tell the tale. The last of them who left this scene of their strifes and contentions was the present Vice President of the United States, the Hon. Wm. R. King, who presided over the deliberations of the Senate nearly twenty years with unsurpassed ability and impartiality, and who, during a long period, occupied the post of chief distinction here as the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations— Statesman, yet friend to truth-of soul sincere, In action faithful, and in honor clear P

In action faithful, and in honor clear P.

I confess, also, a feeling of embarrassment from another source. I am called upon to vindicate myself against charges of the grossest character preferred against me here during my absence. It is the first time in the course of a long life that I have found it necessary to defend myself against degrading imputations before any public tribunal. The calumnies which have been uttered here were all made in connexion with the treaty of the 19th of April, 1850; and I intend, if health and strength permit, to vindicate the course which I adopted while acting as Secretary of State under the administration of the lamented Taylor, in regard to the negotiation of that treaty.

It is a duty incumbent on me to speak—not, however,

the settler fields, and in those other. It could see also, a feeling of minimum countries of the production of the produ strength permit, to vindicate the course which I adopted while acting as Secretary of State under the administration of the lamented Taylor, in regard to the negotiation of that treaty.

It is a duty incumbent on me to speak—not, however, merely for my own vindication, but to enable others now in the administration of the government to understand a subject upon which truth has been more perverted, and falsehood more industriously propagated, than on any other topic of the day. In discharging this duty, I shall endeavor to speak of others with all possible respect, consistently with what I owe to truth, to the country, and to myself. All who recollect my course of conduct while I occupied a seat in this chamber will bear me witness that I never assailed any man personally in debate—never was engaged in any controversy personal in its character with any one, unless it was previously provoked by him Odi accipitem. But now let it be well understood by all here that for every word I utter in debate I hold myself personally responsible everywhere as a gentleman and a man of honor. I have very great contempt for that class of puppies whose courage is evinced by their silence when they are hung up by the ear. When attacked, I will defend myself without the slightest regard to consequence; and in doing that, as I am liable to the infimities of other men, I will carry the war into Africa whenever I think the assailant worthy of my notice. On this occasion much of what I intended to say must be omitted, in consequence of the absence of the distinguished senator from Michigan, [Mr. Cass.] who introduced the discussion in this chamber of Thursday, the oth of January last. I regret his absence and the cause of it. I cannot say those things which I intended to say to him if he were here, for I do not much approve of the modern plan of attacking absent men, who can have no opportunity of defending themselves on the spot. However, in speaking of the subjects referred to in that debate, in which that senator was my principal acc

casation than that. If I understand it at all, it was a charge that I had inserted in the letter to Sir Henry L. Bulwer a direct falsehood; that I had stated that Mr. King, the chairman of the Committee on Foreign Rela-tions, the chosen organ of the Senate to communicate with me—as much the organ of this body as I was the

Rut, sir, here was a much more grave and serious accusation than that. If I enderstand it at all, it was consistent to the consistence of the state of the state

both agreed that we never could and never would recog-nise any title to the eminent domain, as existing in Great Britain, in what was called British Honduras or Belize. We concurred exactly with the report of the honorable chairman of the Committee on Foreign Relations, that all the title that Great Britain had in the territory called Belize was the right of occupancy in the territory pointed out in the treaty of 1786, between Great Brit-ain and Spain.

Belize was the right of occupancy in the territory pointed out in the treaty of 1786, between Great Britain and Spain.

Sir, there were other extraordinary statements made on that occasion. It was stated by some one in debate that Gen. Taylor's executive message to the Senate, communicating the treaty of the 19th of April, 1850, had described the country within which the British were not to occupy, fortify, colonize, or assume or exercise any dominion, as extending from the southern part of Mexico to the interior of New Granada. The President had stated in that executive message that the treaty provided for the protection of all the routes between the points which I have just named; but the country from which the British were excluded by the treaty was the country described in the first article. The eighth article speaks of protection to be given to the Tehuantepec route and the Panama route; and a sad blunder was made by somebody in quoting that passage to show that British Honduras was included in that treaty. It is unnecessary for me to expose what is at once made palpable to every one who will look at the eighth section of the treaty.

Again: it was instinuated in debate, if I understood it, that the President and cabinet had not been informed of my proceedings at the time of the exchange of the ratifications. On what authority such an insinuation may have been made it is impossible for me to conjecture, for I think at this very moment one of the cabinet of President Taylor is within hearing of my voice, and will bear testimony with me, as every other member would, that the whole subject was referred to the President, and perfectly understood by every cabinet minister, as well as by the President himself. It is only necessary to mention if these things, and I have done with them. It is painful to allude to accusations built upon such miserable statements as this.

At the instance of the senator from Michigan, a reso-

Then again:

of lands held under her limits for any other private or special purposes as she could have refused to make the same concession which Mexico made. The rights of Great Britain, under the treaty of 1786, to occupy the land and to cut dye-wood and mahogany, to erect mills to saw it, to fish upon the coast, to refit their ships at the adjoining islands and territories embraced in the triangle described in that treaty, and to occupy those islands when the womito would not permit them to remain on the main land, were rights which could not be divested by that very revolution which Great Britain had encouraged, without manifest dishonor to the local government. If Great Britain had sought to seize upon the territory, she could much more easily have forced the concession of it from the little State of Guatemala than from Mexico, a greatly superior power.

superior power.

The next authority relied upon by the committee is The next authority relied upon by the committee is hearsay evidence, and we are not allowed to know the name of the witness. The report says: "And the committee are informed that on the official map of Yucatan, subscribed by Señor Negra, as commissioner of that province, published in 1848, the southern boundary of that State is established on the parallel of eighteen degrees north latitude." If this be true, it only proves that the British settlements at the Belize had encroached further upon Yucatan and Mexico than we had supposed. If, however, this fact is adduced to prove that Guatemala extends to the eighteenth degree of north latitude, it proves too much, and it cannot possibly be true, for then extends to the eighteenth degree or north random, a proves too much, and it cannot possibly be true, for then Guatemala would include the celebrated Bacalar, and Guatemala would include the celebrated Bacalar, and the fort there established as the north limit of the British settlers. It is not pretended that on this map, which the committee never saw, Yacatan is bounded by Guatemala; and if the man who gave this information will produce the map, I will stake the whole issue between the committee and myself on the fact that the southern boundary of Yucatan will appear by it to be on British Honduras, or Belize.

The next and last authorities relied upon by this committee to prove that British Honduras lies in the State of Guatemala are still more remarkable. This part of the

mittee to prove that British Honduras lies in the State of Guatemala are still more remarkable. This part of the report is so extraordinary in its character, that I dare not attempt to state the mere substance of it lest I should do the committee injustice. I will "speak by the book lest equivocation should undo me." It is, literally, as fol-

"In 1834 the State of Guatemaia made a large grant of

ish colonists, the English alone appearing there, except in the small fort of Baccaire, which has been built to prevent the British from going into the Interior."—p. 123.

So we see that the first authority cited by the committee entirely fails them, and proves that the British settlements are in Yucatan.

The next authority relied on by the committee is "an addition of Guatemala, in eight maps, prepared and engraved in Guatemala, and the tensor in Guatemala, and the resulting the Canadas within our own limits, would not be regarded by any sensible man in a foreign nation as much proof to show that we were entitled to the Canadas; and the next remark I have to make is, that no northern and western boundary of Guatemala is laid down on these maps. The undefined insports that the Gritish had obtained the survey of Guatemala is laid down on these maps. The undefined insports that the Gritish had obtained the survey of Guatemala to be credited for a moment. The map itself shows that Belize is not in Guatemala. In the State Department of War Paz is too absurd in the eyes of any man acquaisted even with the pretension of Guatemala robust even but the proves that the British had obtained the survey of Guatemala robust even but the proves that the British had obtained the survey of Guatemala, found in her own archives in 1828—that is, six years before the maps relied on were made. It is entitled "Map of Guatemala, reduced from the survey of Guatemala, found in her own archives in 1828—that is, six years before the maps relied on were made. It is entitled "Map of Guatemala, reduced from the survey of Guatemala, found in her own archives in 1828—that is, six years before the maps relied on were made. It is entitled "Map of Guatemala, reduced from the survey of Guatemala, senator from Michigan, then being Secretary of War, occupies the third seat at the cabinet table; John Forsyth produces the letter of Alvarez and reads it. I do not believe he solied his fingers with the speech of Señor Annititia to his constituents in Central America, or with the letter of John Galindo, whom the committee have dignified with the name of the "Minister" Don Galindo. When Mr. Forsyth read the passage of the letter of Alvarez, declaring that "it had always been the policy of the United States to prevent and resist European settlements in America, and that the aggressions and encroachments at Belize were a dangerous and alarming violation of this principle," what do you suppose was the appearance and language of General Jackson, who came into power upon the adverse principle, supported by a party which violently denounced the Monroe doctrines, Clay's instructions to Poinsett, and the authors of the Panama mission especially, and all their works! The senator after the mission of John Galindo, the speech of Señor Annitia, and letter of Secretary Alvarez, were all treated with perfect contempt, or at least passed over in perfect silence? We know that General Jackson re-

all treated with perfect contempt, or at least passed over in perfect silence? We know that General Jackson re-fused to take any notice of the subject, as he did of the application of the government of San Salvador asking admission into our Union.

But this letter of Alvarez, when carefully examined, conclusively shows that the Central American govern-

But this letter of Alvarez, when carefully examined, conclusively shows that the Central American government at the time did not pretend that the boundaries of the British settlement, under the treaty of 1786, were within their limits. All they claimed was that "the boundaries should be according to the letter of the convention of 1786." They did not complain of the British settlement within those limits, but they did complain "of an encroachment beyond those limits by more than forty-five leagues." They expressly admitted the limits of Belize, which, they said, were "definitely fixed by the treaty of 1786." and they admitted the Mexican title or "high domain" over the territory of Belize, by saying that "the original treaty limits had been ratified in 1826 by the treaty between Great Britain and the republic of Mexico. They sent John Galindo to England to complain, not of the settlement within the limits of the treaty, but of the encroachments beyond them; and the passage plain, not of the settlement within the limits of the treaty, but of the encroachments beyond them; and the passage cited by the committee from the letter of Alvarez to prove that the settlement of Belize, within the treaty limits, was upon the territory of Central America, proves directly the reverse, as it shows that only the aggressions and encroachments at Belize were upon that territory. A look if consider this despatch of M. Alvarez as conclusively admitting that British Honduras, within the treaty limits, was not in Central America on the 30th of December, 1834, I ask the reading of that letter.

1834, I ask the reading of that letter. [It was then read by the clerk, as follows:

DEPARTMENT OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, St. Salvador, December 30, 1884. St. Saivador, December 39, 1834.

Sir: A short time since, the authorities of the State of Guatemaia granted, for purposes of settlement, sundry lands situated in the neighborhood of the Bay of Honduras to a company, whose object was to form a national establishment upon them. As soon, however, as the authorities of Belize were informed of this grant they declared that the lands in question were within their jurisdiction, were their property, and they positively refused to give the contractors possession of a right which now justly belongs to them.

them.

This extravagant pretension is plainly contrary to the convention of 1735, based upon that of 1783, between their Britannic and Catholic Majesties, which definitively fixed the confines of Belize, within which the inhabitants were to keep themselves; which convention having been ratified the respective courts in 1814, and subsequently in 1826,

by the respective courts in 1814, and subsequently in 1828, by the treaty between Great Britain and the republic of Mexico, it seems clear, without entering into questions of another description, that the boundaries should be according to the letter of that convention.

The inhabitants of Beitze, who have exceeded the established limits by more than forty-five leagues, found their pretensions upon the circumstance of their having occupied the lands in controversy prior to the independence of Central America. But such a violation of existing treaties, persisted in despite the carnest and repeated remonstrances of the Spanish authorities, cannot give those of Beitze a lawful right to consider that as their own which they have in fact usurped.

of the Spanish authorities, cannot give those of Belize a lawful right to consider that as their own which they have in fact usurped.

An after of such magnitude has constrained the government of Central America to accredit Col. John Galindo to the British cabinet; and the Vice President of this republic does not doubt that, through your honorable conduct, the President of the United States may make the most point dintimations to the court of his Majesty upon the subject, and that he will take a lively interest, to the end that the rights of a nation, who is a sister and a friend to that of the North, may not be violated.

The mediation of the President will doubtless give greater weight to the representations which our commissioner may make to the British government; and this republic would deem such a measure a most decided proof of friendship and of a concern for her rights. Suffer me, upon this occasion, to remind you that it has always been an object of the policy of the United States that there should be no European settlements upon the American continent, and that the aggressions and encroachments at Beitze upon the territory of Central America are a daogerous and an aiamning violation of this principle. It belongs to your great and happy republic to piace herself in the vanguard of a policy so interesting to the new American States, and to uphold with her name our rights in the presence of England.

Meanwhile I have the honor to tender to your excel-

land.

Meanwhile I have the honor to tender to your excel-lency the most distinguished sentiments of the consideration with which I am your excellency's very devoted and obs-dient servant.

A LVAREZ.

The SECRETARY OF STATE
of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the
Government of the Republic of North America.]

of the Department of Foreign Affairs of the Government of the Republic of North America.]

I will only add that even the letter of John Galindo and miss that the British are entitled to occupy the town of Belize, 'though I do not consider his letter as compromiting any intreest, for he disregarded all historical true of the Belize, 'though I do not consider his letter as compromiting any intreest, for he disregarded all historical true of the State of the Belize, 'though I do not consider his letter as compromiting any intreest, for he disregarded all historical true of the State of the Belize, 'though I do not consider his letter as compromiting any intreest, for he disregarded all historical true of the State of the Belize, 'though I do not consider his letter as compromiting any intreest, for he disregarded all historical true of the Belize, 'though I do not consider his letter as a series of the state of the st

excite the most anxious concern of this government, and would, if pereisted in, lead to consequences of most unpleasant character."

As the committee thus avow themselves donbtill of the "decided opinion" they expressed, I will proceed to strengthen their doubts, and to refute their opinion, by giving them the information which was not before them. Their report says that "by some of the European geographers [not Spanish] these British settlements are spoken of as in Yucatan." The first authority to which I shall refer them, as they have denied that Spanish geographers have so spoken, is the "Dictionario Geographico" of Don Antonio de Alcedo, published at Madrid in 1786. I quote from the English edition, translated by Thompson, in five volumes quarto, London, 1812:

"BALIS, Rio pg, a river is the province and government."

"Coloniz Anglais.—Sur le territoire de l'ancien état Mexicain d'Yucaum, les Anglais possèdent à l'embouchure te Salvador asking metully examined, American governie.

American governie.

Latie de l'ancien état Mexicain d'Yucaum, les Anglais possèdent à l'embouchure de la Belize, riviere qui se jette dans la baie de Honduras, une colonie composée de 4,000 habitans. Elle porte le reduit examined.

American governie.

Latie de l'ancien état Mexican d'Yucaum, les Anglais possèdent à l'embouchure ras, une colonie composée de 4,000 habitans. Elle porte le reduit examined.

Latie de l'ancien état Mexican d'Yucaum, les Anglais possèdent à l'embouchure ras, une colonie composée de 4,000 habitans. Elle porte le composée de 4,000 habitans.

"We have distinguished on our maps, under the name of English Yucatan, that part of the peninsula which lies to the south of the river Honda, [Hondo,] and of the Spanish military post of Salamanca."

Doming Juanes, a Spaniard, in his "History of Gua-temals," says that "the jurisdiction of the Royal Audien-cia and Chancery of Guatemala extended along the At-lantic from the coast of Belize, in the bay of Honduras, to the Escular de Varganay" lantic from the coast of Belize, in the bay of Honduras, to the Escudo de Veraguay."

In the third volume of the London Encyclopedia, page 419, we find that

"Belize is a river in the peninsula of Yucatan, South America, which falls into the bay of Honduras, in latitude 14 deg. 99 min. north. On its banks, and to the extent of two hundred miles up the stream, the English cut mahogany, and by the treaty of 1783 a right was guarantied to British subjects of cutting and carrying away logwood in the district between this river and the Rio Hondo. Beyond the reene of their operation the Belize is very imperiectly known."

"Belize, a seaport town of *Yucatan*, South America, is an establishment chiefly composed of English settlers at the mouth of the above river."—*Ibid*

I could fill a volume with British authorities, describing at various periods during the last hundred years, their settlements in Honduras as being in Mexico or Yucatan. The committee avoided all these; and their report declares that "respect for the State of Guatemala requires of this government to recognise the boundaries she has prescribed for herself, at least until they are suc-

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would, if persisted in, lead to consequences of most unpleasant character."

As the committee thus avow themselves donbtful of the "decided opinion" they expressed, I will proceed to strengthen their doubts, and to refute their opinion, by giving them the information which was not before them Their report says that "by some of the European goor raphers (not Spanish) these British settlements are so poken, is the "Dictionario Geographico" of Don Antonio de Alcedo, published at Madrid in 1786. I question the English edition, translated by Thompson, in five volumes quarto, London, 1812:

"BALIS, Rio De, a river in the province and government of Yucatan," which runs into the tea upon the same coart near the strand of Bacalar, and into the bay which if formed by that strand and Long Lidant"—Vol. I, pas 1219.

After mentioning the thirteen provinces of Guatemala, Alcedo expressly mentions Yucatan smoog the provinces of "Nueva Espans," (Mexico)—Vol. 2; p. 64, and vol. 3, p. 108. The authority is the more conclusive, as the writer, who was a Spaniard, published his work at Madrid in 1786, the date of the convention which fixed the initial of the Belize settlement. In volume 2, page 207, Alcedo says, "the kingdom of 'Guatemala,' Shounded on the northeast by the province of Yucatan,."

The next authority to which I refer is Humboldt's "Folitical Essay on the Kingdom of 'Guatemala,' is bounded on the northeast by the province of Yucatan,."

The next authority to which I refer is Humboldt's "Colitical Essay on the Kingdom of 'Guatemala,' is bounded on the northeast by the province of Yucatan, is included among the twelve himselencies of Mexico; and in Yucatan, strangtom of Guatemala, and the east by the intendency of Merida, or Yucatan, is included among the twelve himselencies of Mexico; and in Yucatan, and the province of Mexico; and the work of the convention of the Spanish government before it was published in Taris in 1810." I wol. 1, p. 100. The subtravent of the Alcendor of the Cartan of the Alcendor of the Cartan

be small fort of San Felipe de Bacalar, is the most souther that the point inhabited by the Spaniards."

Again, the author says, on page 160:

"Since the settlement of the English between Ome [Omeal and the Rio Hondo, the government, to diminish the contraband trade, concentrated the Spanish and India population in the part of the peninsula west from the mountains of Yocatan. Colonists are not permitted to see the on the western [error, for eastern] coast, on the branches of the Rio Bacalar and Rio Hondo. All this vast country prof [presidio] of Salamanca."

And on the map of Humboldt the British settlements are included in the peninsula of Yucatan.

The next work to which I refer is that of the cale branch ground at Paris in 1847, p. 725, from which I make the following extract:

"Colonic Anallis.—Sur le territoire de l'ancien état Mexican d'Yucatan, is Anglais pos-édent à l'embouchure de la Belize, riviere qui se jene dans la baie de Honduras, elle porte de nom de colonie composée de 4,000 habitans. Elle porte de nom de colonie de Honduras. Son chef lieu est Belize, petite ville avec un port situé à l'endroit où la riviere de can me pette dans le mer."

Having thus described the British settlement as a British colony in the ancient State of Yucatan, in Mexico, at the Belize, a river which empties into the bay of Honduras, M. Malte Brun speaks of "the pette ville avec un port situé à l'endroit où la riviere de can and the number of directors to be in the same proportion as the quantity of stock." President Jackson was highing the facts, in a despatch to Robert B. McAlee, our charge d'affaires at Bogota, disavowed and censured the whole proceeding, and directed him "to disclaim all contains, M. Malte Brun speaks of "the per riviere and the project on the part of this government, to prevent any misunderstanding with the government of the first of the Scale an

of New Granada." The whole object of the Senare and the President was thus frustrated by the incompetency of the agent. President Jackson shortly after went out of office. But the subject was not permitted to a sleep. The records of the State Department show that during every succeeding administration that department has been engaged in the consideration of this subject, and especially in the acquisition of information necessary to enable it to act with effect. In the admirable despatch of Mr. Wheaton, of the 17th December, 1845, it is observed that, "in the letter of instructions given in 1829 by Mr. Clay, then Secretary of State, to our plenipotentiaries appointed to attend the congress of Panama, reference is had to a correspondence on this subject between him and the minister of Central America; and it was stated that if the work (a canal) should ever be executed so as to admit of the passage of sea vessels, the benefits of it ought not to be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, but should be exclusively appropriated to any one nation, and the decision of the appropriate to a state of the a

ord declares that "respect for the State of Guatemala requires of this government to recognise the boundaries shad has prescribed for herself, at least until they are successfully controverted by those territorially interested." Why did not respect for Great Britain equally require of this government to recognise the boundaries she has precibed for herself, or, at least, equally refer to her claims. With her we have an existing treatry of peace, and with the propose of showing her pretensions, and though so much more easy of access. I shall not dwell upon term but having cited the French and Spanish authorities, in Yucatan, and on its banks the English ave their principal settlements for cutting mahogany."

The "Encyclopedia Americana" defines Belize as a sequence of the leading American authorities as the subject.

Darby informs us that "Belize is a river of North America, in Yucatan, and on its banks the English ave their principal settlements for cutting mahogany."

The "Encyclopedia Americana" defines Belize as a sequence of the leading American authorities and the subject.

The "Encyclopedia Americana" defines Belize as a sequence of the control of subjects and the subject of the control of the subject of the control of the control of the subject of the principal settlement belonging to the control of the control of the subject of the control o